

**BEFORE THE TENNESSEE REGULATORY AUTHORITY
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE**

August 29, 2002

IN RE:

**PETITION FOR APPROVAL OF
INTERCONNECTION AGREEMENT
BETWEEN BELL SOUTH
TELECOMMUNICATIONS, INC. AND
ESSEX COMMUNICATIONS, INC. D/B/A
eLEC COMMUNICATIONS**

DOCKET NO. 02-00535

ORDER APPROVING INTERCONNECTION AGREEMENT

This matter came before Director Deborah Taylor Tate, Director Pat Miller, and Director Ron Jones of the Tennessee Regulatory Authority (the "Authority"), the voting panel assigned to this docket, at a regularly scheduled Authority Conference held on July 23, 2002 to consider, pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 252, the Petition for approval of the negotiated interconnection agreement between BellSouth Telecommunications, Inc. and Essex Communications, Inc. d/b/a eLEC Communications. The Petition was filed on May 13, 2002, and came before the Authority pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 252.

Based upon the review of the agreement, the record in this matter, and the standards for review set forth in 47 U.S.C. § 252, the Directors unanimously granted the Petition and made the following findings and conclusions:

- 1) The Authority has jurisdiction over public utilities pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 65-4-104.
- 2) The agreement is in the public interest as it provides consumers with alternative sources of telecommunications services within the BellSouth Telecommunications, Inc. service area.

3) The agreement is not discriminatory to telecommunications service providers that are not parties thereto.

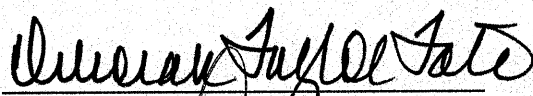
4) 47 U.S.C. § 252(e)(2)(A) provides that a state commission may reject a negotiated agreement only if it “discriminates against a telecommunications carrier not a party to the agreement” or if the implementation of the agreement “is not consistent with the public interest, convenience or necessity.” Unlike arbitrated agreements, a state commission may not reject a negotiated agreement on the grounds that the agreement fails to meet the requirements of 47 U.S.C. §§ 251 or 252(d).¹ Thus, although the Authority finds that neither ground for rejection of a negotiated agreement exists, this finding should not be construed to mean that the agreement is consistent with §§ 251 or 252(d) or, for that matter, previous Authority decisions.


5) No person or entity has sought to intervene in this docket.

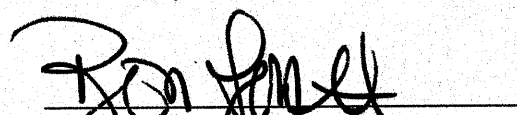
6) The agreement is reviewable by the Authority pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 252 and Tenn. Code Ann. § 65-4-104.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED THAT:

The Petition is granted, and the interconnection agreement negotiated between BellSouth Telecommunications, Inc. and Essex Communications, Inc. d/b/a eLEC Communications is approved and is subject to the review of the Authority as provided herein.


Deborah Taylor Tate, Director


Pat Miller, Director


Ron Jones, Director

¹ See 47 U.S.C. § 252(e)(2)(B)(Supp. 2001).